

NEWS FROM THE LIBERTARIAN PARTY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 7, 1995

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What are Republicans & Democrats afraid of?

Ten new restrictive ballot access bills
pose a "threat to fair elections"

WASHINGTON, DC -- As Colin Powell, Jesse Jackson, and Ross Perot ponder independent campaigns for president or new political parties in 1996, they had better watch out -- Republicans and Democrats are working overtime proposing new laws to keep them off the ballot.

"While millions of Americans clamor for more political choices, Republicans and Democrats across the country are busy writing new laws to protect their two-party monopoly on power," charged Steve Dasbach, Chair of the Libertarian Party, America's third largest political party.

Dasbach said restrictive ballot access legislation has already been filed in 10 states in 1995 -- Alabama, Alaska, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Maine, New Hampshire, and New Mexico.

"These proposed laws would make it more difficult for non-Republicans and non-Democrats to get or stay on the ballot," Dasbach explained. "This should concern not just Libertarians and fans of Mr. Perot, Mr. Jackson, or Mr. Powell, but all Americans who want greater choice when they step into the voting booth."

Dasbach said that Libertarians and other third-party activists have managed to

beat back or stall some of the unfair new laws.

"But this problem won't go away, especially if third-party candidates do well in 1996," he said. "The problem is that Republicans and Democrats write ballot access laws that -- surprise! -- favor Republicans and Democrats."

Dasbach said ballot access laws in America are already "unfair and restrictive" compared to many other nations around the world.

"For example, a new party formed in the United States for the 1994 election needed to collect 3,501,629 valid petition signatures to run a full slate of state and federal candidates," he said. "By contrast, a new political party in Russia needs only 100,000 signatures to get on the ballot for all offices; and only 10,000 signatures are required in South Africa.

"It's deplorable when Russia and South Africa can boast of greater democracy than the United States. And these proposed new laws would only make it worse. They pose a genuine threat to fair elections and democracy."

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